

Down the Road by Dariary_Absentee

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: First Kiss, Hurt/Comfort, M/M, Mentions of Panic Attacks, Underage Drinking, drunk sad boys, mentions of institutionalization, these poor babies just need a hug, this one is quite angsty my dudes

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Summary:

He swallowed and blinked at the sight of Billy's wet face, not from sweat or beer or even the rain. Those were tears, he knew it with some dim certainty that Billy was crying. He usually keeps a tight lid on how he's feeling. Steve is pretty sure everyone he knows does, except Dustin, probably. "You're crying," Steve said, he tried not to let the shock creep into his voice

Down the Road

It started because Steve had a panic attack.

There was something in the bushes, something skittered across the road hitting just the right amount of lamp light to look larger than it should've against the wet pavement. The wind whistled through the trees at just the right pitch, he brain took hold and rampaged so quickly didn't have time to shut down the possibility that it could be anything else but a demodog.

The rest is spotty, really, but he knows that's how it started.

Now he's on some random street he doesn't recognize and Billy Hargrove, who's somehow become his best friend, is walking alongside him with an arm slung around his shoulder--both of them swaying dangerously as they walk. The air is wet with moisture that makes the trees and grass give off a cloying smell, that it just rained on a warm spring day smell.

"That's my method," Billy's voice came in, but it doesn't sound right.

Steve didn't lift his head to look at him.

"I guess it worked well on you 'cause your fine now."

Steve nodded. He is fine now, and he's not sure how Billy did it.

"Yeah, my ma used to fucking panic like that." His voice flooded in even clearer than before, it's still off. It took awhile for him to realize Billy's been talking to him like this since he got him away from that God awful street, but his voice has been there and constantly asking him if he can hear him and if he understands. Steve remembered nodding a few times and responding with some words mostly 'yeah, I hear you'. "So, I told stories or I just kept talking and I'd keep talking." He said. "I'd usually tell her something she shouldn't know, like how I let Donny Masterson light a dead pigeon on fire. That snapped her right the fuck out of it, she was so mad at me. My ma was big on nature and plants, a real fucking hippie, man, she was so pissed."

Steve looked up at him this time, “you lit a...” he stopped. He swallowed and blinked at the sight of Billy’s wet face, not from sweat or beer or even the rain. Those were tears, he knew it with some dim certainty that Billy was crying. He usually keeps a tight lid on how he’s feeling. Steve is pretty sure everyone he knows does, except Dustin, probably. “You’re crying,” Steve said, trying to keep the shock from creeping into his voice.

Billy let the arm around his shoulder drop like he knew it wasn’t to comfort Steve anymore, but the other way around. He learned that despite all the shoving and pushing Billy does, he hates physical contact.

“Issa reflex,” Billy said. “I’m fine.” Steve doesn’t understand, maybe he said that out loud, Billy had an answer for him like he knew what he was thinking. “I’m saying I don’t feel sad, I don’t need you to do it for me either. They just come when I think about her whether I like it or not,” he said. “I don’t feel a damn thing.”

Steve nodded though he didn’t really understand it. “Not a damn thing,” Steve repeated, careful to keep the question out of his voice. Billy’s incredibly smart and like all smart people, he hates to be questioned.

Steve’s feet drag along the wet pavement, he knew where they were now and they weren’t walking in the direction of anything that resembled his house or Billy’s, let alone Martin Dean’s party which either got shut down or is slowing to a drunken crawl.

“We should sit,” he suggested.

Billy nodded in agreement, they were exhausted. They both lowered down to the curb. Steve drew his legs up to his chest while Billy’s jutted out into the road. “So yeah, it’s just a reflex,” Billy said, and Steve knew he was saying it for himself than him at this point. “Because she’s metaphorically dead and when you talk about people like that it just fucking happens.”

“Metaphorically?”

Billy nodded. “Body’s here,” he said. “But her head, Harrington?” He

shook his. "Her head's fucking..." Billy swung an arm out, gesturing at everything from the furniture store across the street to the stars over their heads, "her head is in the wind, man, and it's never coming back."

Steve swallowed again, he didn't know what to say. He never thought about Billy's mom or where she was. Parents get divorced--his practically are--he just figured that's what it was. He thought Billy's parents split, maybe when he was younger or maybe it was recent, and then him and his 'new family' moved to Hawkins. He didn't think his mom was in some asylum somewhere in California wasting away. "Jesus," he finally said, he felt sick. "Billy I--"

"I'm warning you once Harrington, if you say 'I'm sorry' I'll punch your fucking lights out." Billy looked at him with his eyebrow raised and a cheeky smile on his bright lips, the expression looked strange with tears in his bloodshot eyes. "You're already halfway there."

"And you aren't?" Billy shrugged. "You have to be if you're telling me all this, you don't normally..." he looked away from him, "everybody I know is boarded up and stays that way."

He shrugged again, "you would've asked at some point down the road, easier to do it when I'm drunk."

Down the road.

Steve doesn't think of down the road too much anymore, down the road isn't a comfort like it used to be when he was with Nancy. But Billy sees a down the road with him and that spreads warmth through his whole body that has nothing to do with alcohol. He wasn't sure if anyone could imagine having him in their life for very long.

"I'm gonna put my head on your shoulder. I can't keep my head up anymore, I'm so fucking tired, man," Steve announced as a warning, it'd give Billy a chance to tell him whether he could or not. Billy didn't say anything, which usually meant it was fine with him.

Falling onto Billy wasn't so much like an action, it was just like letting go completely. Like Billy has some sort of gravitational pull

with his burning hot skin and golden hair, he might as well be the sun pulling him into his orbit. He smelled like beer and leather with a hint of fading cologne, he liked it better than the flowery plush scent that effused from Nancy in the right wind. "I didn't know you'd want me," Steve mumbled sleepily, he's too drunk to care that he's saying things he shouldn't.

"What's that, Harrington?"

"Didn't know you'd want me," he repeated. "Down the road."

Billy was slow and deliberate with everything in that moment, even down to his breathing, which hitched a little. If he wasn't careful he'd blow this whole thing to hell and Steve would *know*. "You can stick around as long as you want," he decided to say, because as much as he wants him around forever. Billy usually doesn't get what he wants and people he cares about always leave in one way or another.

"So when I call you from here and you're in California, you'll pick up the phone?" He asked.

Billy snorted, everyone thinks he's going back to California. "Not going back to Cali, pretty boy."

Steve made a surprised noise from the back of his throat.

"Ma's back there and I left her, we really just fucking left her," his voice sounded clogged and threatening harder tears. "I miss the fucking sun and all that stuff, but I can't go back there anymore, you get it?"

Steve nodded.

"And I would pick up the phone," Billy added. "I mean you could leave a message if I were busy, but one way or another I'd be around. I mean it, Harrington, for as long as you want me to be."

Steve looked up at Billy. The way they were sitting their faces were close, too close to do anything except breathe in each other's air. His eyes burned looking at the contrast of Billy's bloodshot red and passionately blue eyes. No one would ever do that for him, not Tommy, not Carol, not Nancy, maybe Dustin would one day but he's

thirteen and he'll change and catch wise eventually. He won't need a babysitter forever.

Fat tears rolled down Steve's face. "Fuck," he said thickly.

Billy's eyes were shining brighter than he's ever seen like they were alight with some soft blue flame. He looked at him with an expression Steve was too drunk to decipher, but he knew the charge in the air. He's just never felt it this, this...strong, this heady and powerful. It isn't a storm, it's a hurricane. His eyes dipped to Billy's full pink lips without really thinking about it or even that they were attached to his best friend. Billy closed the space. His lips slotting over Steve's like they've found a home there, like their lips were made to fit. As drunk as he was, Steve knew what he was doing--not on auto-pilot for a second and kissed him like he knew what he wanted more than anything. If the moan that escaped Billy's mouth was any indication, he did know. His thick fingers curled in the long hairs at the base of his skull and tugged lightly, no girl would ever do that. Billy's lips are as soft, the taste of alcohol on the tongue massaging his is familiar, but there's an undercurrent in the way he kisses him that screams *mine mine mine*. If he were standing his knees would go weak at the feeling of being completely and utterly his.

Billy only pulled away to breathe, he wished he didn't need air, if he didn't he could keep up the mind melting kiss with Steve Harrington. He felt like he was made of jelly, all soft and pliant because they'd kissed. It was the best goddamn kiss of Billy's life. "Does being King Steve have anything to do with that?" Billy asked, his voice barely above a whisper.

He watched Steve's face go from pink to red, "I dunno. Does being King Billy have anything to do with that?"

"Yeah," Billy grinned with a satisfied look on his face, "sure as fuck does."

"Figures," Steve said. "Can you stay the night at mine?"

"Yeah." He really couldn't. He'd catch hell from Neil for it, but he wanted to stay with Steve and he knew the guy wouldn't let him walk home alone anyway.

Steve pressed another kiss to Billy's lips all syrupy sweet and slow like they have all the time in the world and there'd be many more down the road.

Author's Note:

I got riggity-riggity WREKT last night and it was a little ugly (lmao smh). I've been wanting to write them sad and drunk for a really long time and it was the push I needed.